

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1-8 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of outputting a database search information in a database system for retrieving records using a search key and retrieving records from a plurality of databases in a chain-reactive manner, the method comprising:

a step of retrieving a record by entering an initial search key into an initial database;

a step of retrieving a subsequent record by entering a subsequent search key, which is contained in the retrieved record and different from the initial search key, into a subsequent database different from the initial database in a chain-reactive manner from the initial database via a plurality of sequent databases to provide subsequently retrieved records as search results;

a step of outputting, in the case that a first subsequent record retrieved from a first subsequent database on a chain-reactive search path does not contain a subsequent search key to be entered into a second subsequent database that is subsequently searched, information for identifying a first subsequent record that does not contain the subsequent search key and information for identifying [[a]] the first subsequent database having the first subsequent record.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of outputting a database search information according to claim 1, in the case that the first subsequent record that does not contain a subsequent search key to be entered into a second subsequent database is present among records retrieved from any intervening database other than the [[first]] initial database and a pre-designated terminal database, the method further comprising:

~~a step of outputting information for identifying the first record and information for identifying a database having the first record; and~~

a step of outputting the contents of the first subsequent record at the same time [(of)] with [(the)] said step of outputting information or in accordance with a specific operation.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of outputting a database search information according to claim 1, wherein in the step of retrieving ~~search keys and~~ subsequent

records in a chain-reactive manner, information for identifying a group of search keys and a group of records retrieved through a series of retrieval processes in accordance with the search path is displayed in a matrix form using the databases and a group of the first search keys as indexes.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of outputting a database search information according to claim 2, wherein in the step of retrieving ~~search keys and~~ subsequent records in a chain-reactive manner, information for identifying a group of search keys and a group of records retrieved through a series of extraction processes in accordance with the search path is displayed in a matrix form using the databases and a group of the first search keys as indexes.
5. (Currently Amended) A program for causing a computer to carry out a method of outputting a database search information in a database system for retrieving records using a search key and retrieving records from a plurality of databases in a chain-reactive manner, comprising:
 - a module for retrieving a record by entering an initial search key into an initial database;
 - a module for retrieving a subsequent record by entering a subsequent search key, which is contained in the retrieved record and different from the initial search key, into a subsequent database different from the initial database in a chain-reactive manner from the initial database via a plurality of Sequent databases to provide subsequently retrieved records as search results;
 - a [[step]] module for outputting, in the case that a first subsequent record retrieved from a first subsequent database on a chain-reactive search path does not contain a subsequent search key to be entered into a second subsequent database that is subsequently searched, information for identifying a first subsequent record that does not contain the subsequent search key and information for identifying [[a]] the first subsequent database having the first subsequent record.
6. (Currently Amended) The program according to claim 5, in the case that the first subsequent record that does not contain a subsequent search key to be entered into a second subsequent database is present among records retrieved from any intervening

database other than the [[first]] initial database and a pre-designated terminal database, the ~~method~~ program further comprising:

~~a step of outputting information for identifying the first record and information for identifying a database having the first record; and~~

a [[step]] module of outputting the contents of the first subsequent record at the same time [[of]] with [[the]] said module of outputting information or in accordance with a specific operation.

7. (Currently Amended) The program according to claim 5, wherein in the [[step]] module of retrieving ~~search keys and~~ subsequent records in a chain-reactive manner, information for identifying a group of search keys and a group of records retrieved through a series of retrieval processes in accordance with the search path is displayed in a matrix form using the databases and a group of the first search keys as indexes.
8. (Currently Amended) The program according to claim 6, wherein in the [[step]] module of retrieving ~~search keys and~~ subsequent records in a chain-reactive manner, information for identifying a group of search keys and a group of records retrieved through a series of retrieval processes in accordance with the search path is displayed in a matrix form using the databases and a group of the first search keys as indexes.